

Argosy University
COURSE SYLLABUS
PP7100 Professional Issues: Ethics, Conduct, and Law
Summer 2009

Faculty Information

Faculty Name: Eugene Hightower PhD

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Office Hours: Thursday: 4:30-5:30 and by appointment.

Course description: This course explores ethical and legal issues related to professional conduct, including such topics as ethical reasoning, APA ethical principles, state regulations with respect to licensure, standard of care and malpractice issues, complaint resolution procedures, privacy, privilege, confidentiality, mandatory reporting, releases, records, and maintenance of proper professional boundaries. The course addresses ethical issues in areas such as assessment, ethical psychological service delivery across the life span and to special populations, and consultative/ supervisory relationships.

Course Pre-requisites: None

Required Textbooks:

Bersoff, D. (Ed.) (2008) *Ethical Conflicts in Psychology*, 4th edition. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association ISBN: 978-1-4338-0350-5 .

Fisher, C (Ed.) 2009 *Decoding the Ethics Code: A Practical Guide for Psychologists*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage

2002 Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct (pp. 14ff in Bersoff)

Print outs from California Board of Psychology website (<http://www.psychboard.ca.gov>):

- Summary of California Laws Relating to the Practice of Psychology
- Psychotherapy Never Includes Sex

- 2005 Laws and Regulations Relating to the Practice of Psychology

Reprints to be distributed in class:

Donner, M (2004) “Mandated Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse.” Expertise Series Task Force, California Board of Psychology.

Donner, M (2005) “Child Treatment, Parents and Privacy: What Rights Do Children Have?” *The California Psychologist*, September /October.

Kramer, D (2003) “The Ontogeny of Wisdom and Its Variations.” In J. Demick and C. Andreoletti, *Handbook of Adult Development*. NY: Plenum.

Gilligan, C (1988) “Two Moral Orientations.” in C Gilligan and J Ward (Eds.) *Mapping the Moral Domain*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Juujarvi, S (2005) “Care and Justice in Real life Moral Reasoning.” *Journal of Adult Development*.

Kohlberg, L (1983) *Moral Stages: A Current Formulation and Response to Critics*. NY: Plenum.

Course Length: 7.5 Weeks

Contact Hours: 45 Hours

Credit Value: 3.0

Course Relevant Program Outcome, Competencies and Objectives:

Goal 1: The preparation of professionals who are capable of delivering effective and ethical diagnostic and assessment services to a diverse set of clients.

- **Objective e:** Students will acquire an understanding of the current body of knowledge regarding the ethical issues surrounding testing and assessment. Students are prepared to confront the complex and sensitive ethical issues that often arise in assessment situations, especially when assessed population is vulnerable because of diverse background, age, disability, or sexual orientation. The ethics of assessment is covered in the required course sequence in ethics as well as in the assessment sequence and at practica and internship sites
- **Competency e:** Students will demonstrate an understanding of the current body of knowledge regarding the ethical issues surrounding testing and assessment.

Goal 2: The preparation of professionals who are competent to provide a wide range of effective and ethical therapeutic interventions to a diverse set of clients.

- **Objective c:** Students will acquire an understanding of the ethical principles of professional practice.
- **Competency c:** Students will acquire an understanding of the ethical principles of professional practice in psychology. Students will demonstrate that they know how to monitor their professional activities and guide their actions in accordance to the profession's ethical standards.

Course Objectives: *By the time students complete this course, they will be able to do the following through discussion of real-world vignettes, an in-depth analysis of an ethical dilemma in a psychological setting, and analysis of a series of real-world dilemmas presented in the final examination:*

- Identify, discuss and demonstrate their understanding of California laws regulating the practice of psychotherapy.
- Identify, discuss and demonstrate their understanding of the ethical codes of conduct related to psychotherapists.
- Apply what they have learned about professional, personal, ethical and legal codes and laws to real life situations.

Course Assignments:

- Assigned readings (to be read before each class).
- Two five page essays discussing one of the following topics, both due in class on August 13 : ADD from Hightower "Written Papers"
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- Each paper should:
 - a) identify the legal, ethical and clinical issues .
 - b) cite laws and ethical regulations that pertain to these issues.
 - c) explain the action that you would take to resolve the issues.
 - d) explain what you would say to the clients and other key people involved.

CHOOSE TWO ESSAYS FROM THE TOPICS LISTED BELOW.

1. **Dealing with a Value Conflict.** Identify one specific value that you are likely to push, or an area where you might expect to struggle because of a value conflict with a given client. Or – identify one of your core values and show how this value could either enhance or inhibit the effectiveness of counseling. Demonstrate how you might proceed to lessen the chances that you would impose your values on this client.

2. **Ethics in Multicultural Practice/or GLBT Practice** . Raise what you consider to be the most significant questions regarding the ethical aspects of multicultural practice or GLBT practice – and then address your questions.

3. **Malpractice**. Identify some of the ways you will go about decreasing the chances of getting involved in a malpractice suit. Focus on your attitudes and actions that are likely to prevent you from malpractice actions. Address common malpractice issues such as managing suicidal or violent clients.

4. **Informed Consent**. Address how you are likely to go about the process of obtaining informed consent from a client during the initial session. What aspects would you most want to address?

5. **Confidentiality**. What would you most want to tell your clients about confidentiality during the early sessions? Present some of your main ideas in simple and clear language, as though this were a part of your informed consent. What are the limits of confidentiality? What is privilege?

Boundaries: Discuss your own guidelines for how you will go about establishing clear and appropriate boundaries with clients both during and after the termination of treatment. How do boundary issues impact whom you can treat? Describe the debate in psychology regarding “appropriate boundaries”. What is the difference between crossing boundaries and violating boundaries?

7.Termination: What issues would you explore with your client? Explain how you’d proceed. How is the client best helped in the termination process? What is client abandonment?

8. Bartering: Your client tells you he or she will have to terminate counseling with you because of losing a job and the inability to pay for therapy. Your client suggests a bartering arrangement with you as a way to continue therapy. Demonstrate how you’d deal with this situation in an ethical and effective manner. What specific issues would you want to address with this client?

9.Sexual Attractions: Assume that one of your clients informs you that he/she finds you sexually attractive. Show how you’d deal with this situation. What issues would you explore? What if you also found this client attractive? What if you did not find this person attractive? How would you manage transference and counter transference issues?

10. Competence: What does it mean to be a competent psychologist? How will you assess your competence? How will you maintain/expand your competence? What are the limits to competence? When are psychologists allowed to perform outside their area of competence?

- Class presentation of one of the weekly reading assignments.
- Final exam: multiple choice, true false, and short answer to a series of questions about the ethical/legal dilemmas pertaining to the practice of psychology.

Grading Criteria

Grading Scale

A	100 – 93
A-	92 – 90
B+	89 – 88
B	87 – 83
B-	82 – 80
C+	79 – 78
C	77 - 73
C-	72 – 70
D+	69 – 68
D	67 – 63
D-	62 – 60
F	59 and below

Grading requirements

<i>Attendance/participation</i>	<i>Required</i>
<i>Written papers</i>	<i>1/3</i>
<i>Class presentation</i>	<i>1/3</i>
<i>Final exam</i>	<i>1/3</i>
	<i>100%</i>

Ethical Dilemma Paper Rubrics (1/3):

Performance Element	Exemplary (A, A-)	Proficient (B+, B, B-)	Emerging (C+, C)	Unacceptable (F)
Writing and thinking style	Paper is extremely well-written, reflecting excellent clarity of thought and organization	Paper is well-written, reflecting minor confusion in thought and/or organization	Paper is marginally written, reflecting muddled thinking and some disorganization	Paper is poorly written, reflecting considerable confusion in thinking and/or organization
Clinical appropriateness	Interventions are highly appropriate; respectful of clients; accurately and well-constructed	Interventions are appropriate; indicates minor criticalness/blame towards client; contains minor errors in construction	Interventions are somewhat inappropriate; indicates considerable criticalness/blame towards clients; contains 1 major error in construction	Interventions are inappropriate; indicates alarming and potentially damaging effects on clients; contains 2+ major errors in construction
Creativity	Interventions are extremely creative, especially in addressing clients' idiosyncratic and diversity issues	Interventions are creative and adequately address uniqueness of clients	Interventions are simplistic and only marginally address diversity issues	Interventions are unimaginative and pedestrian and fail to adequately address diversity issues
Conceptual skills	Interventions are particularly well-conceptualized within the given theoretical framework, reflecting an accurate and substantial grasp of material	Interventions are well-conceptualized, reflecting a good but not completely accurate or in-depth grasp of material	Interventions are marginally well-conceptualized, reflecting gaps in accuracy or substance of theoretical material	Interventions are poorly conceptualized, reflecting significant gaps in accuracy or grasp of theoretical material
Points	<i>20-25</i>	<i>13-19</i>	<i>6-12</i>	<i>0-5</i>

Class presentation (1/3):

Performance Element	Exemplary (A, A-)	Proficient (B+, B, B-)	Emerging (C+, C)	Unacceptable (F)
Content	Discussion incorporates the elements from the assigned reading succinctly, yet thoroughly; extremely well prepared, with major ideas discussed in depth. Role play, vignette, or class game offered .	Discussion incorporates all elements from the reading; mostly prepared but some questions are not well thought out beforehand; major ideas are discussed but some are not explored in-depth.	Discussion omits some elements from the reading or they are marginally addressed; questions indicate lack of preparation and/or organization; only a few of the major ideas are discussed; major ideas are not discussed in-depth.	Discussion omits significant elements from the reading and/or they are poorly and inadequately addressed; little or no preparation is obvious; two or fewer ideas are discussed; major ideas are not covered.
Facilitation	Many class members involved in discussion; questions for class are structured to encourage analysis and exploration of ideas.	A few class members involved in discussion; questions for class encourage analysis but not all questions encourage exploration of ideas.	The same class members are involved for all questions; questions are not structured for exploration but for explanation; major ideas are not explored in depth.	Hardly any class members are involved in discussion; ideas are presented as explanations instead of questions for exploration.

Final Examination

The final exam is worth a third of your final grade. The exams will be graded on a standard normal curve.

A /A-	
B+ /B/ B-	
C+ /C/ C-	
D	
F	

Course Policies:

Attendance: Campus policy is that students may not miss more than two classes and still receive credit for the course. Should you become ill or face some emergency situation that causes you to miss class please email the instructor with an explanation.

Tardiness: It is extremely important that students arrive on time to class and return promptly from breaks.

Assignments: Any assignments turned in late will automatically be lowered one full grade. Assignments are considered late if they are not turned in during the class time on the date the assignment is due.

Class participation: Please read the assignments in advance and be prepared to discuss what you have read. I will note the thoughtfulness, relevance, and accuracy of your discussion contributions. “Relevance” refers to being on topic and aware of others’ contributions to the discussion.

Professional ethics: Students are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner. At all times, students are expected to adhere to the ethical guidelines established by the American Psychological Association. Please reference the academic honesty and plagiarism statement referenced in the syllabus addendum. Privacy among classmates and of the materials presented is to be maintained.

APA Manual: Read and the study the APA Manual. Pay particular attention to the sections that deal with constructing references, headings, how to write and phrase ideas, making tables, etc. This manual is the guide to the creation of all documents at Argosy University, and although the university may modify some of the rules (see Guide to the Dissertation Process) to fit local needs or wishes, you must become very familiar with its usage. Remember the APA manual is also a guide that addresses style issues, and goes beyond structure and format. **Papers:** The following outlines the specifications for papers. One inch margins around, a cover sheet in APA form and style, and a page of references. Page numbers should start on the first page. The page numbers should appear on the top right margin without regard to the 1-inch margin rule. Be sure to adhere to the paper length requirement and due dates stated in each learning activity

Assignments:

A list of weekly reading assignments will be handed out at the first class meeting.

On-Line Resources:

All resources in Argosy University's online collection are available through the Internet. The campus librarian will provide students with links, user IDs, and passwords.

Library Resources: Argosy University's core online collection features **34,872** full-text journals and **over 38,500** electronic books and other content covering all academic subject areas including Business & Economics, Career & General Education, Computers, Engineering & Applied Science, Humanities, Science, Medicine & Allied Health, and Social & Behavior Sciences. Many titles are directly accessible through the Online Public Access Catalog at <http://library.argosy.edu>. Detailed descriptions of online resources are located at <http://library.argosy.edu/misc/onlinedblist.html>.

In addition to online resources, Argosy University's onsite collections contain a wealth of subject-specific research materials searchable in the Online Public Access Catalog at <http://library.argosy.edu>. Catalog searching is easily limited to individual campus collections. Alternatively, students can search combined collections of all Argosy University Libraries. Students are encouraged to seek research and reference assistance from campus librarians.

Information Literacy: Argosy University's Information Literacy Tutorial was developed to teach students fundamental and transferable research skills. The tutorial consists of five modules where students learn to select sources appropriate for academic-level research, search periodical indexes and search engines, and evaluate and cite information. In the tutorial, students study concepts and practice them through interactions. At the conclusion of each module, they can test their comprehension and receive immediate feedback. Each module takes less than 20 minutes to complete. Please view the tutorial at <http://library.argosy.edu/infolit/>. An overview of the tutorial is available at <http://www.ausfba.com/pdf/InfoLitTutorial.pdf>.

Academic Policies

Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism: In an effort to foster a spirit of honesty and integrity during the learning process, Argosy University requires that the submission of all course assignments represent the original work produced by that student. All sources must be documented through normal scholarly references/citations and all work must be submitted using the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 5th Edition (2001)*. Washington DC: American Psychological Association (APA) format. Please refer to Appendix A in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 5th Edition* for thesis and paper format.

Students are encouraged to purchase this manual (required in some courses) and become familiar with its content as well as consult the Argosy University catalog for further information regarding academic dishonesty and plagiarism.

Scholarly writing: The faculty at Argosy University is dedicated to providing a learning environment that supports scholarly and ethical writing, free from academic dishonesty and plagiarism. This includes the proper and appropriate referencing of all sources. You may be asked to submit your course assignments through “Turnitin,” (www.turnitin.com), an online resource established to help educators develop writing/research skills and detect potential cases of academic dishonesty. Turnitin compares submitted papers to billions of pages of content and provides a comparison report to your instructor. This comparison detects papers that share common information and duplicative language.

Americans with Disabilities Act Policy

It is the policy of Argosy University to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If a student with disabilities needs accommodations, the student must notify the Director of Student Services. Procedures for documenting student disability and the development of reasonable accommodations will be provided to the student upon request.

Students will be notified by the Director of Student Services when each request for accommodation is approved or denied in writing via a designated form. To receive accommodation in class, it is the student’s responsibility to present the form (at his or her discretion) to the instructor. In an effort to protect student privacy, the Department of Student Services will not discuss the accommodation needs of any student with instructors. Faculty may not make accommodations for individuals who have not been approved in this manner.

The Argosy University Statement Regarding Diversity

Argosy University prepares students to serve populations with diverse social, ethnic, economic, and educational experiences. Both the academic and training curricula are designed to provide an environment in which students can develop the skills and attitudes essential to working with people from a wide range of backgrounds.